

Testimony in Opposition to Bill 1138

Senator Duff, Representative Reed, members of the Energy and Technology Committee. Thank you for taking the time to read over my written testimony opposing bill 1138 as written. My name is Frank DaCato and I am the Training Coordinator for Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 777. I am also a member of the State Apprentice Council as well as the State Plumbing and Pipe Works Board and Solar Thermal subcommittee.

What is considered renewable energy? This question as well as the answer below was taken directly off the CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection web site.

Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-1(a)(26) defines "Class I renewable energy source" as: "(A) energy derived from solar power, wind power, a fuel cell, methane gas from landfills, ocean thermal power, wave or tidal power, low emission advanced renewable energy conversion technologies, a run-of-the-river hydropower facility provided such facility has a generating capacity of not more than five megawatts, does not cause an appreciable change in the river flow, and began operation after July 1, 2003, or a sustainable biomass facility with an average emission rate of equal to or less than .075 pounds of nitrogen oxides per million BTU of heat input for the previous calendar quarter, except that energy derived from a sustainable biomass facility with a capacity of less than five hundred kilowatts that began construction before July 1, 2003, may be considered a Class I renewable energy source, or (B) any electrical generation, including distributed generation, generated from a Class I renewable energy source."

You will note that the definition begins with, Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-1 (a) (26) defines "Class I renewable energy source" as: (A) energy derived from solar power etc. It then goes on to state "**or** (B) any electrical generation, etc. Those of us who are involved in the energy industry understand that solar power is power derived from the sun. This solar energy basically is used in two ways, one is photo voltaic which takes the sun's energy and transforms it into electrical power. The other is solar thermal which takes the sun's energy and heats either domestic hot water or heating hot water.

I would like to address you in arguing why solar thermal should remain as part of the definition as to what Class I renewable energy is.

First by the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection's own definition solar is a "Class 1 renewable source". Since the sun is the provider of this source of energy I believe that we can all agree that solar is a renewable source of energy.

Second, as you are all aware CT has one of the highest energy costs in the country. Any one in business will tell you this is a hindrance to either staying here or moving here. The high cost of energy in CT is costing CT's residences jobs by keeping businesses out and causing others to move out.

Third, by keeping solar thermal systems eligible as a Class I renewable energy source you will help by creating jobs in the hard hit construction industry in this state. Installations are done by highly trained and skilled installers who learn their crafts over a period of years.

Fourth, solar thermal is a clean, zero emission efficient means of creating energy in particular in business that use large amounts of hot water such as hospitals, hotels, factories, and laundromats, as well as other high volume water users can not only save on conventional energy such as oil or gas and electricity but it also greatly reduces the carbon footprint produced by these products. Most electricity is currently produced by burning some type of fuel, be it gas, oil, garbage or coal.

Some years ago I had the privilege of sitting on the CT Green Jobs Coordination and Policy Committee which was chaired by Rep. Vickie Nardello. We were tasked with trying to recommend ways of creating employment through green technologies. These not only include the installation but the manufacture of these products. I can tell you that technology does not come much greener than solar thermal.

In closing, I would once again like to thank you for taking the time to review my testimony in opposition to 1138 as written. If you have any questions I can be reached on my cell phone at (203) 464-3601 or by e-mail at fdacato@local777.org.

Respectfully Submitted
Tuesday, March 19th, 2013.

Frank J. DaCato